

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (currently amended) An image transform method, for transforming original input image data into image data expanded by a ratio represented by a rational number or an integer, comprising the steps of:

5 reducing correlation in the vertical and horizontal directions of an image that is linearly expanded in the vertical and horizontal directions to generate first expanded image data by a rank order processing in a window having a predetermined size wherein a target pixel and its neighboring pixels in the linearly expanded image data
10 are included;

 performing linear interpolation, based on correlation with a target pixel constituting said original image data and neighboring pixels arranged in oblique directions, using said neighboring pixels to generate second expanded image data by determining an
15 ~~interpolation direction based on values of differences between said target pixel and said neighboring pixels,~~ wherein the neighboring pixels comprise a first neighboring pixel and a second neighboring pixel, and wherein determining an interpolation direction comprises:

calculating a left oblique difference using the target pixel
20 and the first neighboring pixel;

calculating a right oblique difference using the target pixel
 and the second neighboring pixel;

determining the left oblique direction to be the interpolation
 direction when the left oblique difference is smaller than a
25 threshold value and when the right oblique difference is greater than
 a threshold value; and

determining the right oblique direction to be the interpolation
 direction when the left oblique difference is greater than a
 threshold value and when the right oblique difference is smaller than
30 a threshold value; and

 employing said first expanded image data and said second expanded image data in an arithmetic combination to generate a final image.

Claim 2. (canceled)

Claim 3. (canceled)

Claim 4. (canceled)

Claim 5. (currently amended) An image transform method, for transforming original input image data into image data expanded by a ratio represented by a rational number or an integer, comprising the steps of:

5 forming an image by linearly expanding original image data in the vertical and horizontal directions; and

reducing the vertical and horizontal directional correlation of said image through a rank order processing to generate a final expanded image, wherein the rank order processing includes:

10 raster-scanning a window enclosing a target pixel and one or more of its neighboring pixels; and

computing an output value of the target pixel by performing an averaging operation on pixels enclosed within the window.

Claim 6. (previously presented) An image transform method, for transforming original input image data into image data expanded by a ratio represented by a rational number or an integer, comprising the steps of:

5 forming an image by linearly expanding original image data in the vertical and horizontal directions; and

reducing the vertical and horizontal directional correlation of said image through a rank order processing to generate a final expanded image;

10 determining, for said expanded image, whether the contrast in said original image data can be maintained at a predetermined level; and

extracting a high frequency component from said expanded image, when said contrast can not be maintained at said predetermined level, and adding said frequency component multiplied by a constant to said
15 expanded image, or subtracting said frequency component multiplied by a constant from said expanded image.

Claim 7. (canceled)

Claim 8. (canceled)

Claim 9. (canceled)

Claim 10. (currently amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:

input means for entering original image data to be expanded;

vertical and horizontal directional interpolation means for
5 interpolating said original image data in the vertical and horizontal
directions;

vertical and horizontal directional correlation reduction means
for reducing correlation of the obtained image in the vertical and
horizontal directions;

10 oblique direction detection means for detecting an oblique
direction having a strong correlation with a target pixel and
neighboring pixels in said original image data, wherein the
neighboring pixels comprise a first neighboring pixel and a second
neighboring pixel, and wherein detecting an oblique direction
15 comprises:

calculating a left oblique difference using the target pixel
and the first neighboring pixel;

calculating a right oblique difference using the target pixel
and the second neighboring pixel;

20 detecting the left oblique direction to be the oblique
direction when the left oblique difference is smaller than a
threshold value and when the right oblique difference is greater than
a threshold value; and

detecting the right oblique direction to be the oblique
25 direction when the left oblique difference is greater than a
threshold value and when the right oblique difference is smaller than
a threshold value; and

directional interpolation means for employing said neighboring
pixels in said detected oblique direction to perform interpolation in
30 said oblique direction.

Claim 11. (original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

generation means for generating expanded image data based on an image obtained by said vertical and horizontal directional correlation reduction means and an image obtained by said oblique directional interpolation means.

Claim 12. (original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising:

input means for entering, as an adjustment value, the personal preference of a user concerning image quality,

wherein said generation means employs said adjustment value to synthesize said image obtained by said vertical and horizontal directional correlation reduction means with said image obtained by said oblique directional interpolation means.

Claim 13. (original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said vertical and horizontal directional correlation reduction means performs the ranked median value selection, for the target pixel and its neighboring pixels in the linearly expanded image data, and thereby reduces the correlation of an image in the vertical and horizontal direction.

Claim 14. (canceled)

Claim 15. (currently amended) An image processing apparatus for transforming original input image data into expanded image data comprising:

a vertical and horizontal directional linear interpolation unit for forming an image by linearly expanding original image data in the vertical and horizontal directions; and

a vertical and horizontal directional correlation reduction processing unit for reducing, for said image, a vertical and horizontal directional correlation using a rank order processing to generate a final expanded image, wherein the rank order processing includes:

raster-scanning a window enclosing a target pixel and one or more of its neighboring pixels; and

15 computing an output value of the target pixel by performing an averaging operation on pixels enclosed within the window.

Claim 16. (currently amended) An image processing apparatus for transforming original input image data into expanded image data comprising:

5 an interpolation direction determination unit for reading a target pixel and neighboring pixels in original image data, ~~for calculating directional differences between said target pixel and said neighboring pixels for right oblique and left oblique directions, and for determining an interpolation direction based on said directional differences,~~ wherein the neighboring pixels comprise a first
10 neighboring pixel and a second neighboring pixel, and wherein determining an interpolation direction comprises:

calculating a left oblique difference using the target pixel and the first neighboring pixel;

15 calculating a right oblique difference using the target pixel and the second neighboring pixel;

determining the left oblique direction to be the interpolation direction when the left oblique difference is smaller than a threshold value and when the right oblique difference is greater than a threshold value; and

20 determining the right oblique direction to be the interpolation direction when the left oblique difference is greater than a threshold value and when the right oblique difference is smaller than a threshold value; and

25 an oblique directional linear interpolation unit for performing linear interpolation for said target pixel by using said neighboring pixels arranged in said determined interpolation direction.

Claim 17. (original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said interpolation direction determination unit reads peripheral pixels arranged within a predetermined mask range

adjacent to said target pixel and/or said neighbor pixels and adds
5 together the differences between said peripheral pixels and said
target pixel and said neighbor pixels, and determines said
interpolation direction based on the cumulative value of said
differences.

Claim 18. (canceled)

Claim 19. (canceled)

Claim 20. (previously presented) An article of manufacture
comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program
code means embodied therein for causing image transformation, the
computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture
comprising computer readable program code means for causing a
computer to effect the steps of claim 1.

Claim 21. (original) An article of manufacture comprising a
computer usable medium having computer readable program code means
embodied therein for causing image transformation, the computer
readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect
the steps of claim 5.

Claim 22. (canceled)

Claim 23. (canceled)

Claim 24. (original) A program storage device readable by
machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by
the machine to perform method steps for image transformation, said
method steps comprising the steps of claim 1.

Claim 25. (original) A program storage device readable by
machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by
the machine to perform method steps for image transformation, said
method steps comprising the steps of claim 5.

Claim 26. (canceled)

Claim 27. (canceled)

Claim 28. (previously presented) A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embedded therein for causing image processing, the computer readable program code means in said computer program product comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 10.

Claim 29. (previously presented) A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embedded therein for causing image processing, the computer readable program code means in said computer program product comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 15.

Claim 30. (previously presented) A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embedded therein for causing image processing, the computer readable program code means in said computer program product comprising computer readable program code means for causing a computer to effect the steps of claim 16.

Claim 31. (canceled)

Claim 32. (canceled)

Claim 33. (canceled)